

Chair's Message

The main event to report on this time is the annual SIGMOD conference, held recently in Chicago. Seeing the organization up close, I'm amazed at the effort that goes into it, primarily from people who volunteer their time freely for the good of the community. We owe them a big round of applause, and sincere thanks:

The program committee chairs Surajit Chaudhuri (SIGMOD) and Jan van den Bussche (PODS) did a heroic job, together with the respective PCs.

Goce Trajcevski deserves special mention for his dedicated work on the thankless task of local arrangements. Peter Scheuermann did a great job of obtaining sponsorships, helping to secure the financial side of the conference, and I'd like to thank Clement Yu for taking on the demanding role of General Chair for the conference.

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the generous support provided by the following companies:

Oracle and Sybase (principal supporters); Google, IBM, Intel, Microsoft Research, and SAP (supporters); Hewlett Packard, Motorola, U. Hasselt, Yahoo! Research (contributors); Ask Jeeves (supporting organization)

A number of people gave generously of their time in a variety of capacities. Please see the following URL to see who they are, and how much work went into the conference!

<http://tangra.si.umich.edu/clair/sigmod-pods06/>

Sibel Adali and Vassilis Vassalos took on the task of selecting the SIGMOD Undergraduate Scholarship winners with very little notice, and did a great job, with the help of a committee assembled almost instantly: Torsten Grust, Sudipto Guha, Ihab Ilyas, Chen Li, Nikos Mamoulis, and Maria Esther Vidal. I just looked at the link above and noticed that they are not listed (an oversight because of the circumstances); none of them thought to point this out earlier, or perhaps, even to look. I think this underscores one of the strengths of our community ... the willingness of busy researchers to take on voluntary tasks at short notice, for the good of the field rather than the recognition. I hope we never lose this spirit.

I'd like to give special thanks to the student volunteers:

Joel Booth, Hui Ding, Eduard Dragut, Fang Fang, Oliviu Ghica, Ali Hakim, Dongmei Jia, Ying Lai, Shuang Liu, Fang Liu, Ramanathan Narayanan, Berkin Ozisikyilmaz, Amira Rahal, Damian Roqueiro, Huiyong Xiao, Lin Xiao, Huabei Yin, Wei Zhang, and Wei Zhou.

Finally, as we approached the conference date, a number of issues surfaced and required considerable, and unanticipated, attention. I'd like to particularly thank Mary Fernandez, Ginger Ignatoff, and Joanne Martori for their help in this regard; of course, a number of other people involved in organizing the conference stepped up as well.

Turning to the main event, the conference highlighted a strong technical program with award-winning papers:

The SIGMOD Best Paper Award winner:

- Panagiotis Ipeirotis, Eugene Agichtein, Pranay Jain, Luis Gravano
 - To Search or to Crawl? Towards a Query Optimizer for Text-Centric Tasks

The SIGMOD Best Paper Award honourable mentions:

- Michalis Petropoulos, Alin Deutsch, Yannis Papakonstantinou
 - Interactive Query Formulation Over Web-Service Accessed Data Sources
- Izchak Sharfman, Assaf Schuster, Daniel Keren
 - A Geometric Approach to Monitoring Threshold Functions over Distributed Data Streams

The PODS Best Paper Award winner:

- Mikolaj Bojanczyk, Claire David, Anca Muscholl, Thomas Schwentick, Luc Segoufin
 - Two-Variable Logic on Data Trees and XML Reasoning

The PODS Best Newcomer Award winner:

- Michael Bender, Haodong Hu
 - An Adaptive Packed-Memory Array

In addition, several awards were made at this year's conference recognizing significant contributions over the years:

Jeff Ullman received the SIGMOD Edgar F. Codd Innovations Award.

Tamer Ozsu received the SIGMOD Contributions Award.

The SIGMOD Test-of-Time Award was presented jointly to:

- Tian Zhang, Raghu Ramakrishnan and Miron Livny
 - BIRCH: An Efficient Data Clustering Method for Very Large Databases
- Venky Harinarayan, Anand Rajaraman and Jeffrey D. Ullman
 - Implementing Data Cubes Efficiently

The SIGMOD Dissertation Awards Committee evaluated 18 submissions for the 2006 dissertation award. The main criteria for the evaluation were: Theory/Foundational Work, System Orientation and Impact. Congratulations to all the winners and their advisors; the pipeline of superb young researchers with their high standards and great enthusiasm is vital to our community's continued vibrance and impact:

The winner of the inaugural ACM SIGMOD Doctoral Dissertation Award is Gerome Miklau, who did his PhD at the Univ. of Washington, advised by Dan Suciu.

The two runners up are Marcelo Arenas (PhD from Univ. of Toronto; advisor Leonid Libkin) and Yanlei Diao (PhD from Univ. of California-Berkeley; advisor Michael Franklin).

Sincerely,
Raghu Ramakrishnan